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ABSTRACT

This Kids Count report examines statewide trends in the well-being of North Carolina's children. The statistical portrait is based on 16 indicators of well-being: (1) infant mortality rate; (2) infants born with low birth weight; (3) births to single teens; (4) children without insurance; (5) high school dropout rate; (6) SAT scores; (7) high school retention rate; (8) child abuse and neglect; (9) children in out-of-home placements; (10) training school commitments; (11) juvenile arrests; (12) training school commitments; (13) child deaths; (14) child support collections; (15) children living in poverty; and (16) children receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The bulk of the report is comprised of summaries of the indicators in the health, education, safety, and security areas; a statement of the state vision for the areas, and a list of the counties scoring the best and worst on each indicator. The findings indicate that based on 1992 data, the well-being of North Carolina's children deteriorated between 1985 and 1992 in 5 areas. More than 18 percent of children live in household with no adult male present. The rate of unmarried teen births rose 61 percent. The juvenile violent arrest rate is increasing much faster than the nation as a whole. Infant mortality declined by 15 percent, but the state still ranks 43rd. Although the high school dropout rate fell by 9 percent between 1985 and 1992, North Carolina still ranked 46th on this indicator. The report concludes with a county-by-county listing for each indicator and information on data definitions and sources. (KB)

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Children's Index

A Profile of Leading Indicators of the Health & Well-Being of North Carolina's Children

1995

2

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

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Overview 2

Health 5

Education 10

Safety 14

Security 19

County Data 22

Glossary & Sources 24

Children's Index

A Profile of Leading Indicators of the Health & Well-Being of North Carolina's Children

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Overview

Each day in North Carolina...

Three babies die, sixty-seven children are abused or neglected, forty-five families are started by teens, and thirty-eight teenagers drop out of high school.

1995 INDEX AT A GLANCE

	94 Index	95 Index	% Change
Health			
Infant Mortality	9.9	10.6	+7.0%
Low Birthweight	8.4%	8.7%	+3.6%
Births to Single Teens	10.7%	11.0%	+2.8%
Children without Insurance	278,000	283,000	+1.7%
Education			
High School Dropout Rate	3.06	3.35	+9.5%
SAT Scores	859	860	+0.1%
High School Retention Rate	65.6	64.4	-1.8%
Safety			
Abuse and Neglect			
Out-of-Home Placement	94,475	95,811	+1.4%
Training School Commitments	5,806	6,362	+9.5%
Juvenile Arrests	832	865	+3.9%
Security	29.3	31.2	+6.5%
Child Support Collections*			
Children Living in Poverty	$347.1	$409.5	+18%
Children Receiving AFDC	320,101	348,068	+8.7%
	220,835	222,980	+0.9%

*in Millions BETTER WORSE

The *1995 Children's Index* is the eighth annual edition of the profile of North Carolina's children. The *Index*, first published in 1988, paints a statistical portrait of the status of children. This year's *Index* sounds the alarm for the state's families and children. Overall, North Carolina is neither healthy nor safe for children. The infant mortality rate is again on the rise, and far too many adolescent girls are giving birth. Rates of abuse and neglect and child deaths have increased. And, there are more children living in poverty without the benefit of health insurance. The only bright spots are a one point increase in SAT scores and a hefty $62.5 million increase in child support collections.

The *1995 KIDS COUNT Data Book*, a state-by-state study which reports on conditions facing America's children, ranks North Carolina 42nd (down from 40th in 1994). The state has never been ranked higher than 39th since the ranking began five years ago. Based on 1992 data, the study reports that between 1985 and 1992, the well-being of the state's children deteriorated in five areas. More than 18 percent of North Carolina's children are living in households with no adult male present. The rate of the state's unmarried teens having children rose 61 percent from 1985-92. The juvenile violent arrest rate is increasing much faster than the nation as a whole. Infant mortality has declined by 15 percent, but the state still ranks 43rd. Although the high school dropout rate fell by nine percent between 1985-92, North Carolina still ranks 46th on this indicator.

What Can We Do?

For decades, the state has been struggling with the paradox of having both world-class technology in a few urban areas and a growing number of people receiving inadequate services. This problem weighs heaviest on our children. Shortcomings in prenatal care, preventive care, diagnostic screening, and early childhood education all affect children's ambitions to learn and fully participate in life.

North Carolinians must break the intergenerational cycle of poor health, education, and poverty that is forcing far too many children into a downward spiral of hopelessness.

The Institute recommends the following strategies:

- Establish a comprehensive delivery system of children's services by assisting communities to develop, through collaborative problem-solving, a stronger connection between education, health, and human services programs.
- Link welfare reforms to economic development by promoting entrepreneurship and job creation strategies for low-income populations through demonstration transfer payment reinvestment programs. For example, an AFDC recipient who has become self-employed could receive Medicaid for two years after AFDC benefits are canceled.
- Support school-based health centers that can provide health services to students, especially in rural counties, where the need is great and resources are limited.
- Develop a range of welfare-to-work programs that emphasize immediate job placement as well as those that provide more intensive services. Both produce sustained

increases in employment and earnings for single parents on welfare and a clear payoff on the public's investment.

- Conduct a comprehensive review of existing and proposed legislation and regulations to identify and correct inefficiencies in services to children and their families. This review should pay special attention to eligibility requirements and procedures for government services which would be complementary.

The *1995 Children's Index* presents an opportunity to empower families to provide positive futures for their children. Home, family, neighborhood, and community shape the contours of childhood. Action in one sphere ripples through the others. In the best circumstances, these realms are compatible. The best circumstances, however, elude increasingly larger numbers of North Carolina's children.

Acknowledgements

Organizing and completing the *Children's Index* is an enormous undertaking, requiring the time, expertise, and resources-of diverse individuals and organizations across the state. The NC Child Advocacy Institute wishes to thank all the people in the various state agencies and other organizations who so generously provided the data and analysis needed to publish this report. The Institute invites their continued participation and support in future projects.

It is with great appreciation that the Institute acknowledges the generous financial support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation of Baltimore, Maryland; the A.J. Fletcher Foundation of Raleigh; the Blumenthal Foundation of Charlotte; and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation of Winston-Salem. We thank them for their leadership in making a difference in the lives of North Carolina's children.

Thanks also go to OPUS I, Inc. for the design and production of this report and to Michael Zirkle, the photographer, for his wonderful pictures. The Institute also acknowledges the contributions of Robert Donnan, communications director at the Southern Growth Policies Board, for his valuable suggestions.

Special recognition and thanks to Institute staff members Annette Phillips, who coordinated data collection, entry, ratings, and rankings; Julie Rehder, who offered ideas ensuring the accuracy of the report; and John Niblock, who provided guidance, research support, and editorial support. The day-to-day research, administration, and writing of the *Index* was performed by Dr. Oliver C. Johnson Jr.

Finally, we thank the children of North Carolina for their patience and understanding while we strive to "make kids count," because they are counting on us.

NC Compared to the Nation

Overall Rank: 42th

Indicator	NC	US	Rank
% Low Birth Weight Babies	8.4	7.1	43
Infant Mortality Rate	10.0	8.5	43
Child Death Rate *ages 1-14/100,000*	33.7	28.8	40
% Births to Single Teens *ages 15-19/1,000 females*	49.5	42.5	39
Juvenile Violent Crime Arrest *ages 10-17/100,000*	404	483	35
% High School Dropouts *ages 16-19*	12	9.3	46
% Teens Not in School *ages 16-19*	10.6	9.9	30
Teen Violent Death *ages 15-19/100,000*	72.1	66.6	29
% Children in Poverty	19.3	20.6	28
% Single-Parent Families	24.8	25.3	28

Source: 1995 KIDS COUNT Data Book, The Annie E. Casey Foundation. State Profiles of Child Well-Being. Note: All data are from 1992.

Health

The Vision

THE BEST & WORST

	BEST ▲	WORST ▼
Low-Birth Weight	Swain	Camden
	Graham	Hyde
	Watauga	Bertie
	Alleghany	Warren
	Mitchell	Pasquotank
Infant Mortality	Alleghany	Camden
	Graham	Greene
	Hyde	Scotland
	Jones	Edgecombe
	Tyrrell	Columbus
	Yancey	
Teens Births	Onslow	Bertie
	Mitchell	Scotland
	Yancey	Robeson
	Dare	Martin
	Watauga	Halifax

All children will be born healthy and grow up healthy with access to timely and affordable health care. All children will receive adequate nutrition and recreation to develop healthful lifestyles.

8

Infant Mortality

WORSE

Last year, some

1,079 infants died

before their

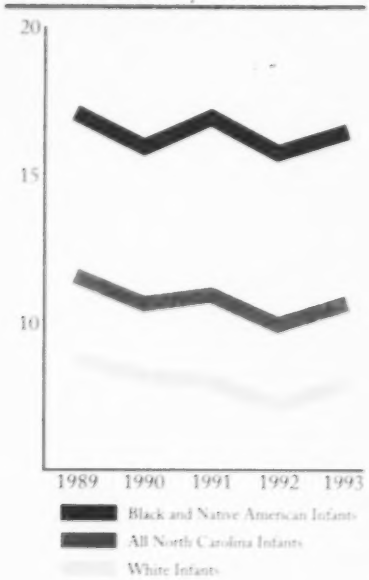
first birthday.

In 1993, North Carolina's infant mortality rate (10.6 per 1,000 births) returned to double digit figures. After a one-year hiatus at the single digit level (9.9 per 1,000 births, lowest in state history), the state has experienced a ratcheting-up of this distressing indicator reflecting the ill-being of children. The rate for 1993, is the same as for 1990, which makes it the second lowest in the state's history. Still, some 1,079 infants died before their first birthday – 46 more than the previous year. The infant mortality rate declined by 15 percent from 1985-92, dropping from 11.8 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1985 to 10 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1992. The *1995 KIDS COUNT Data Book* ranks the state 43rd in this category.

Despite a decade of dramatic declines in overall infant mortality, the survival prospects of minority infants have failed to improve. The rate for minority babies (16.4) remains more than double the rate for white babies (7.9). The mortality rate for white babies rose from 7.2 to 7.9, an increase of almost 10 percent. The rate for minority babies rose from 15.7 to 16.4, an increase of 4.5 percent. Factors contributing to the disparity in mortality rates between white and minority babies are high rate of low birth weight babies; high incidence of adolescent pregnancy; repeat pregnancies among adolescents; and lack of prenatal care.

The discrepancies that persist between white and minority mortality rates imply that an improved distribution of prenatal care services could have a significant impact on this indicator. There have been recent improvements in entering prenatal care during the first trimester for both white mothers and minority mothers. Among minority women, the percentage receiving no prenatal care decreased by 7.1 percent. There were no changes for white mothers.

INFANT DEATHS *per 1,000 births*



Access to prenatal care is essential to reducing infant mortality. A nationwide study has ranked North Carolina's efforts to improve access to high quality, comprehensive prenatal care for low-income women as best in the nation. These efforts are known in practice as the Baby Love program. Studies indicate the program saves an estimated $1 million each year by improving birth outcomes. Baby Love is a cooperative effort between the state's Division of Medical Assistance, Division of Maternal and Child Health, and Office of Rural Health and Resource Development. The Baby Love Outreach Program helps low-income pregnant women get prenatal care through Medicaid.

NOTE: There are two components of infant mortality: neonatal mortality and postneonatal mortality. Neonatal refers to deaths of infants during the first 28 days of life. These deaths are caused by congenital abnormalities, conditions associated with prematurity, and complications of delivery. Postneonatal refers to deaths of infants between the ages of 28 and 365 days. Deaths during the postneonatal period typically result from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), infectious diseases, and accidents. The mortality rate for a baby's first month of life is more than twice as high as the mortality rate during the remainder of the year. Therefore, it is critical to the survival rate of newborns that expectant mothers receive prenatal care. Providing immediate access and knowledge of services are Family Resource Centers, Home Visitation programs and school-based clinics.

County Findings

Some 46 North Carolina counties exceeded the state's average infant mortality rate (10.6). Rates ranged from zero in Alleghany, Graham, Hyde, Jones, Tyrrell, and

Yancey, to a high of 52.6 in Camden, and five counties had rates more than double the state average. These counties were located in the Northeast and Southeast regions of the state. Note: Single-year data can be misleading because wide fluctuations can occur from year to year due to the small number of births in some counties.

Low Birth Weight

WORSE

8.7 percent of babies

born in North Carolina

were born with low

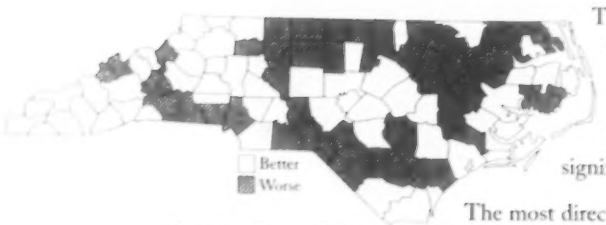
birth weight.

The overwhelming consensus among medical practitioners is that prenatal care reduces low birth weight. In particular, women who initiate care earlier in their pregnancies give birth to healthier infants and are less likely to give birth to an infant weighing less than five and one-half pounds.

Birth weight is a key indicator of the health of newborn infants. Low birth weight babies (those weighing less than five and one-half pounds) are much more likely than other babies to die during their first year of life and to suffer from long- and short-term disabilities.

In 1993, 8.7 percent of babies born in North Carolina were born with low birth weight – a rate higher than at anytime since 1975. This rate is also higher than 30 foreign countries. The percentage for minority infants (13.0) is almost twice the rate for white infants (6.6).

Researchers at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) have concluded that infant mortality is more closely linked to the length of the pregnancy than to the size of the baby. Though closely related, premature birth and low birth weight are not the same thing. Babies born before the 37th week of pregnancy can be heavier than five and one-half pounds.



Counties that are better or worse than state average (8.7) on Low Birth Weight Rate

The NIEHS study reviewed 7.5 million birth records in the U.S. and in Norway, where infant mortality is 10 percent lower. Researchers found that U.S. infants tend to be slightly smaller, but concluded that deaths occurred more frequently among infants who were delivered prematurely. Birth weight was less significant.

The most direct way to reduce infant death and disease is to alleviate the factors which lead to the births of premature and low birth weight babies. Numerous programs to prevent poor pregnancy outcomes and strengthen the well-being of children are now in operation across the state. Policymakers must continue to support efforts like the FIRST STEP campaign which encourages women to use family planning services, distributes educational materials in English and Spanish, and distributes a self-help workbook that provides an interactive approach for mothers who wish to quit smoking. Established in 1990, FIRST STEP is a statewide initiative to reduce infant death and illness.

County Findings

County low birth weight rates ranged from a low of 4.3 percent of all births in Swain County to a high of almost 16.0 percent in Camden County.

Children Without Health Insurance

WORSE

Over 283,000

North Carolina

children lacked health

insurance.

In 1994, over 283,000 North Carolina children lacked health insurance. For many of these children, private insurance is difficult to afford because of high rates of poverty. Even if one or both parents work full-time, they are typically paid low wages and receive virtually no benefits. Even with the expansions in Medicaid eligibility requirements, significant gaps in coverage remained until North Carolina took action to remedy the plight of uninsured families with children. Now, all poor children, zero to 18, are covered.

Obviously, families and their children are frustrated by a public health system that requires them to plow through a maze of government and medical bureaucracies to acquire adequate care. We cannot afford to let them slip through the cracks. With an impending labor shortage looming, the state's public and private sector leaders are already devising strategies to bring all able-bodied workers into the labor force and employ them to the very best of their abilities. In this era of global competition, no North Carolinian is expendable. The quality of the state's future labor force is at stake when one in six children is growing up in a family without health insurance.

NOTE: Helping to fill the void in health insurance coverage for low-income children is the Caring Program for Children. Established in 1987, the Caring Program for Children has helped secure free health insurance for over 3,500 children ineligible for Medicaid and not covered under private health insurance. A nonprofit charitable organization, the Program has a network of 1,200 physicians and 52 hospitals providing health services to children at a reduced rate.

Births to Single Adolescents

WORSE

For every dollar spent

on babies born

to teens in

North Carolina,

only a penny is spent

on prevention.

Although the numbers are declining, the statistics on adolescent pregnancy and parenthood paint a disturbing picture of North Carolina. In 1993, 15,537 girls between the ages of 10 and 19 gave birth. The State Center for Health and Environmental Statistics reported that 31 of the state's 70 health departments listed teen pregnancy as one of their top five health problems; in 22 counties, more than half of adolescent mothers between 1988-92 either received no care or did not receive care until very late during their pregnancies. The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* reports that between 1985 and 1992, North Carolina's teens having children rose 61 percent compared to a nationwide increase of 44 percent.

Many young girls are choosing to have children out-of-wedlock. Unfortunately, babies raised in fatherless homes are two-and-one-half times more likely to be poor than those born to two-parent families. Fatherless homes also assure increases in welfare costs (AFDC, Medicaid, and Food Stamps). The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina recently reported that the welfare costs for teen births jumped from $232 million in 1987 to $457.8 million in 1991. And, according to the Coalition, for every dollar spent on babies born to teens in North Carolina, only a penny is spent on prevention.

A recent survey on adolescent sexual behavior, conducted by the NC Department of Public Instruction, found that almost one in 10 (or approximately 27,000) high school students reported that they had either been pregnant or impregnated someone. The study also found that black adolescents were three times more likely

than white adolescents to report one or more pregnancies, and more than four times as many black female students (18 percent) reported one or more pregnancies, compared to four percent of white female students.

The costs associated with adolescent pregnancy are high to young mothers, their children, and the community. Teen mothers, though they are most in need of early prenatal care, are least likely to receive it. The lack of prenatal care means that teen mothers are at risk of delivering low birth weight babies. Low birth weight often means expensive postnatal care. Further, low birth weight babies have a higher risk of congenital defects and developmental lags, which can also result in high medical costs as well as increased need for special educational and social services.

Counties that are better or worse than state average (11.0) on Births to Single Teens

The Children's Defense Fund sums up the conditions that influence minority adolescents' predilection to become parents as a "combination of limited opportunities and a less developed sense of their own potential that places them at particularly high risk of early parenthood."

If adolescents are to take the actions necessary to prevent pregnancy, they have to understand that pregnancy will significantly decrease their options in the future. Through forging public-private collaborative initiatives, organizations such as the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina are beginning to make inroads toward what previously has been an intractable problem.

County Findings

Counties ranged from a high of 23.8 percent of all births to single adolescents in Bertie County to a low of 4.7 percent in Onslow County. Fifty-one counties exceeded the state average on births to single teens.

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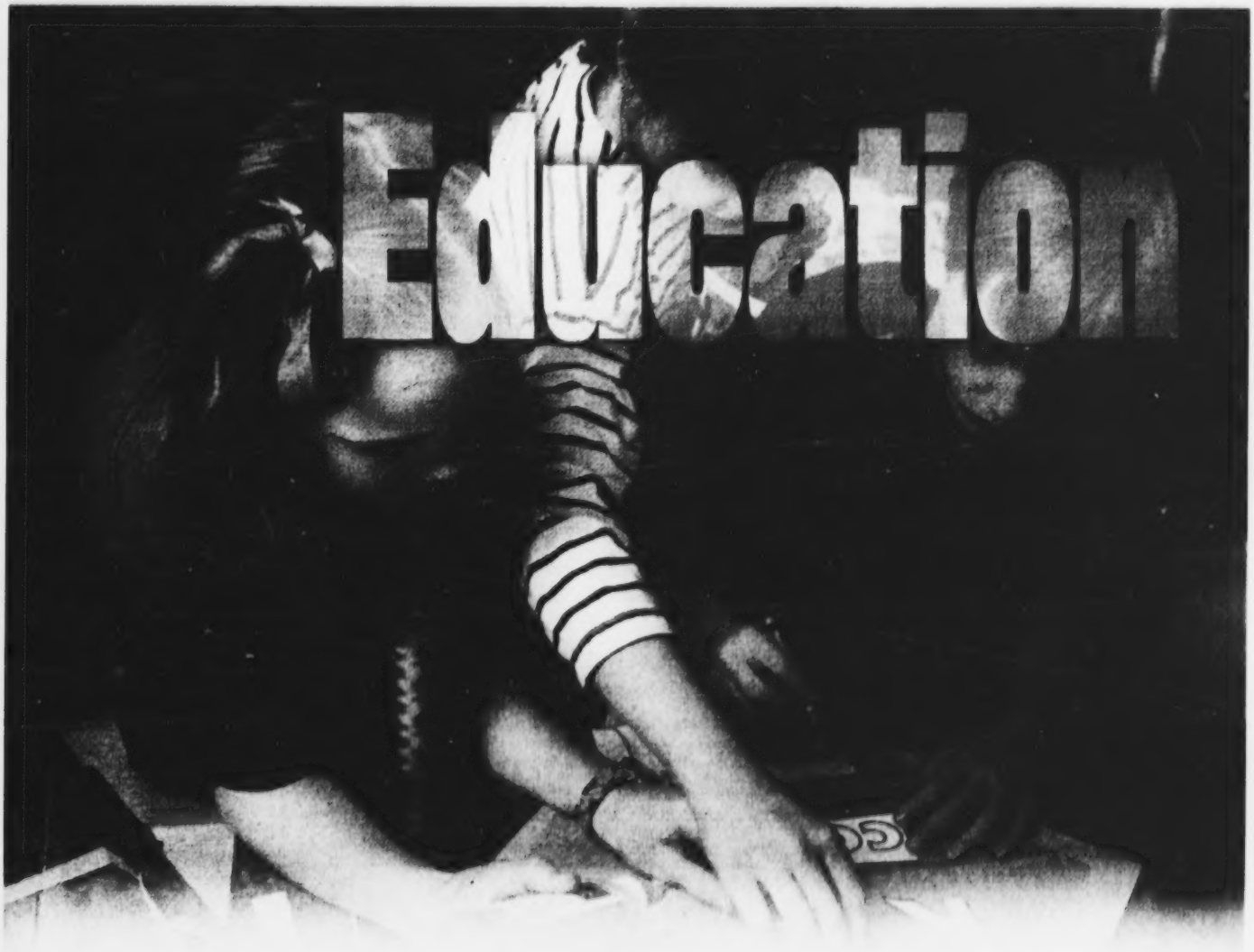


The Vision

THE BEST & WORST

	BEST ▲	WORST ▼
SAT Scores	Wake	Hertford
	Davie	Northampton
	Buncombe	Halifax
	Watauga	Bertie
	Ashe	Warren
High School Graduation Rate	Davie	Caldwell
	Tyrrell	Halifax
	Cabarrus	Scotland
	Cumberland	Hoke
	Perquimans	Warren
Drop Out Rate	Greene	Graham
	Camden	Randolph
	Perquimans	Mecklenburg
	Clay	Caldwell
	Pamlico	Wilkes

All children will have the care and support they need to enter school ready to learn. All children will receive a quality, comprehensive education that ensures their ability to develop into young adults who are literate, skilled, knowledgeable and socially responsible.

13

SAT Scores

BETTER

The 1994 SAT score of 860 is one point higher than the score from the previous year.

Beginning in 1989, when the state ranked worst in the nation with an SAT score of 836, North Carolina has accomplished five consecutive years of improvement – the only state that administers the test to do so. The NC Department of Public Instruction reports that the 1994 SAT score of 860 is one point higher than the score from the previous year.

While the test scores from neighboring states with 40 percent or more high school seniors taking the test remained static or declined, (Virginia, -9; Georgia, -3; South Carolina, 0) North Carolina's five-year increase of 24 points surpasses that of any other SAT state.

Of the seven Southern Regional Education Board states with more than 40 percent taking the test (Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia), North Carolina was the only one in 1994 in which the percentage of low verbal scores decreased and the percentage of high verbal scores increased.

North Carolina's SAT participation rate of 60 percent in 1994 remained the same as the previous year. Overall, North Carolina ranked 48th on total SAT scores, ranking above Georgia, South Carolina, and the District of Columbia. Iowa ranked first, but only five percent of the state's seniors took the SAT; the other senior test-takers took the ACT. When compared to the 24 states with 40 percent or more taking the test, North Carolina ranked 21st. Oregon, with a 53 percent test-taking rate, was first with an average score of 927.

Counties that are better or worse than state average (860) on SAT Scores

The national average SAT score of 902 remained the same as last year's score. The national verbal score decreased by one point while the math score increased by one point. In 1994, North Carolina's average verbal (405) and math (455) were the highest the state has ever achieved.

The State Superintendent, Bob Etheridge, has put in place several measures to spur a continued rise in state SAT scores. This is the first year the state has supported student participation in Advanced Placement courses in every school system. As a result, student enrollment in these courses has increased significantly. In addition, the Algebra I requirement for graduation, end-of-course tests, the Department of Public Instruction's report card, and state funds for students to take the PSAT (preliminary or practice SAT) have generated an increase in student participation in the higher level courses which are the courses students must take to raise aggregate SAT scores.

County Findings

SAT scores ranged from a high of 929 in Wake County to a low of 688 in Hertford County. Only five counties had average SAT scores higher than the national average of 902. They were Wake, Buncombe, Davie, Watauga, and Ashe. Five counties had average SAT scores below 750. They were Hertford, Northampton, Halifax, Bertie and Warren.

Student Dropout Rate

WORSE

17,371 students

dropped out

of school.

In the 1960s, almost half of North Carolina's students dropped out of school. By the mid-1980s the dropout rate had declined to around 7.5 per 1,000. Although there has been a decline in the dropout rate over several decades, the 1994 dropout rate of 3.35 per 1,000 marks a 9.5 percent increase from the previous year. The 17,371 students who dropped out of school clearly show that the educational system is losing too many students. Using 1992 data, the *KIDS COUNT Data Book* reports the state dropout rate fell by nine percent between 1985 and 1992. However, North Carolina ranks 46th nationally on this measure.

In North Carolina, a dropout is defined as a student who leaves school before graduation or completion of a program of study for any reason except death or transfer to another school. The reasons students drop out of school are academic failure, discipline problems, employment, illness, marriage, family instability, and dislike of school.

Addressing these issues has always been a priority of the $850 million Basic Education Program (BEP), initiated as a directive of the General Assembly over a decade ago. The BEP began as an effort to provide a comprehensive program of instruction for students in large and small, rural and urban districts. It now provides about $30 million a year for dropout prevention efforts at the local level. The funding supports intensive counseling, tutoring, quality preschool programs, positive discipline, and other activities necessary to keep students in school.

Counties that are better or worse than state average (3.35) on Dropout Rate

Recent studies confirm that attending quality preschool programs like Smart Start gives disadvantaged children the chance to begin kindergarten on par with others, and that quality preschool reduces the likelihood of dropping out of school and facing a life of crime and substance abuse. Ignoring the basic economics of quality preschool could cost North Carolina dearly in the long run. The future of the state demands that all children be educated in order that they may one day actively participate in the work force. It is no longer possible for North Carolina to build its economy on low skills and low wages.

County Findings

Dropout rates for grades seven through 12 ranged from a low of 0.5 in Greene County to a high of 7.22 in Graham County. Forty-two counties had dropout rates higher than the state average of 3.35. Unlike the SAT and other indicators, student rates of retention are not clustered in areas of poverty.

High School G

WORSE

A rate of 64.4 reveals another year of decline.

The high school graduation rate measures the percent of students who graduate "on time" four years after entering ninth grade. The 1993-94 graduation rate of 64.4 declined slightly from last year's rate of 65.6. If *A Nation at Risk* was the clarion call of the 1980s, *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages*, published five years ago, sounds the alarm for the 1990s. More and more, work depends on higher order skills, greater ability to solve problems and adapt to new situations, and a willingness to take responsibility.

The failure of so many students to complete high school will continue to hurt North Carolina's chances of attracting high-quality jobs. A recent survey found that more than half of the state's employers frequently encountered problems finding qualified applicants, and more than half were not satisfied with the preparation of high school graduates.

Counties that are better or worse than state average (64.4) on Graduation Rate

North Carolina's Tech Prep program – which combines two years of high school with two years of post-secondary education – has been highly successful. Since the program was implemented, the percentage of high school graduates going on to post-secondary education has doubled. Also, the dropout rate, where the program has been implemented, has fallen by more than half, and SAT scores have risen 50 points.

County Findings

High school graduation rates ranged from a low of 48.2 percent in Caldwell County to a high of 78.4 percent in Davie County. Forty-eight counties had graduation rates better than the state average.

City School Systems*

City	Drop Out	SAT	Graduation
Albemarle	2.62 *10*	888 *6*	64.5 *9*
Asheboro	4.95 *17*	848 *12*	67.0 *7*
Asheville	3.66 *14*	913 *4*	66.2 *8*
Burlington	4.28 *15*	887 *7*	60.0 *13*
Chapel Hill/Carrboro	1.59 *2*	1026 *1*	82.5 *2*
Clinton	2.60 *9*	755 *18*	59.7 *15*
Elkin	2.17 *7*	960 *2*	78.6 *3*
Hickory	6.64 *19*	921 *3*	71.9 *5*
Kannapolis	2.49 *8*	783 *17*	63.9 *10*
Kings Mountain	3.33 *13*	851 *11*	58.8 *16*
Lexington	2.02 *5*	844 *13*	61.5 *11*
Mooresville	4.45 *16*	913 *4*	83.1 *1*
Mt. Airy	1.85 *4*	869 *10*	68.4 *6*
Newton/Conover	1.72 *3*	872 *9*	54.7 *17*
Roanoke Rapids	2.08 *6*	887 *7*	72.9 *4*
Shelby	2.76 *11*	816 *15*	60.4 *12*
Thomasville	5.31 *18*	796 *16*	54.4 *18*
Weldon	1.39 *1*	670 *19*	50.0 *19*
Whiteville	3.24 *12*	817 *14*	60.0 *13*

The state's 19 City School Systems are ranked from one (Best) thru 19 (Worst).
The rankings are shown (above) in italicized type.
** See page 22 for County School Systems.*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Safety

THE BEST & WORST

	BEST ▲	WORST ▼
Child Abuse/ Neglect	Gates	Cleveland
	Bertie	Haywood
	Perquimans	Rutherford
	Martin	Macon
	Anson	Edgecombe
Juvenile Arrest	15 counties had no juvenile arrests.*	Alamance
		Guilford
		Edgecombe
		Mecklenburg
		Robeson
Violent Arrest	54 counties had no violent arrests.*	Cumberland
		New Hanover
		Mecklenburg
		Guilford
		Pitt

All children will have strong, stable, and capable families who are knowledgeable about parenting and child development. All children will live in safe homes and neighborhoods, with access to essential services in their community.

17

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

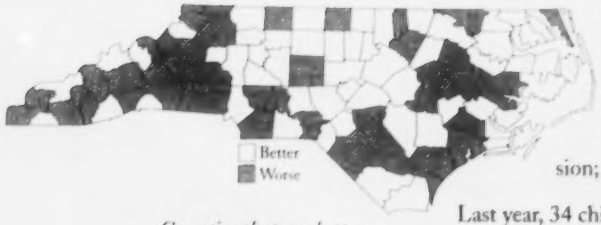
Abuse and Neglect

WORSE

95,811 children were reported for abuse and neglect.

Although child abuse and neglect reports appear now to be leveling off after steady increases through the 1980s, North Carolinians cannot rejoice about the 95,811 children reported for abuse and neglect in fiscal year 1993-94. However, this represents an increase in the number of children reported over 1992-93 of only 1.4 percent, which is much lower than the 23 percent increase reported the previous year. It is too early to tell if the number of children reported to be abused and neglected is leveling off, or if there were external factors that contributed to an anomaly. The total number of cases substantiated in fiscal year 1993-94 was 30,386. It is clear that the state must still find measures to cope with the thousands of children who are subjected to maltreatment.

Factors most frequently identified as contributing to child abuse and neglect continue to be lack of child development knowledge (21.5 percent), alcohol abuse (13.9 percent), mental and emotional problems (11 percent), and drug abuse (10.9 percent). The number of substantiated reports listing drug problems as a major contributing factor has increased 141 percent in the past five years. The most frequently named perpetrator of neglect and abuse is the child's own mother.



Counties that are better or worse than state average (59.65) on Abuse and Neglect

The primary sources of reports of abuse and neglect are education personnel (17 percent), non-relatives (16 percent), relatives (15 percent), and medical personnel (8 percent). Of the substantiated neglect reports, 37.5 percent were for improper care/lack of discipline; 25 percent were for improper supervision; and 22.7 percent for injurious environment.

Last year, 34 children died as a result of suspected or confirmed abuse and neglect; 29 of those children were less than three years old. Since 1991-92, at least 160 children have died from child abuse. Of those, 124 were less than three years of age.

The NC Division of Social Services recently reported a substantial drop in cases of neglect, which had escalated since 1989. Neglect, which includes anything from child abandonment to improper care, jumped from just under 10,000 verified cases in 1989-90 to nearly 17,000 in 1992-93. There were 15,300 verified cases of neglect in 1993-94, a decrease of 10 percent from the previous year. Human services professionals identify the change in the legal definition of neglect as being one of the factors leading to the decrease in the number of verified cases of neglect.

To help reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect, Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina is requesting that the Legislature appropriate $550,000 in FY 1995-96 and $1 million in FY 1996-97 to build on existing home visiting services for families who are identified as at-risk for abuse and neglect. The funds would create a new program based on the Baby Love-Maternal Outreach Model. Home visiting programs have proven to be effective and successful in preventing child abuse and other negative childhood outcomes.

County Findings

Forty-two counties had child abuse rates that exceeded the state average of 59.65 children per 1,000. Gates County had the lowest rate (3.79), while Cleveland County had the highest (137.86). Mecklenburg, Cumberland, Wake, Buncombe, and Robeson Counties accounted for 21,693 reports of abuse and neglect, representing over 20 percent of the 95,811 children reported abused or neglected.

Out-of-Home Placement

WORSE

Last year, 6,362

children were placed

outside of

their homes.

Last year, 6,362 children were placed outside of their homes in foster care, psychiatric hospitals, or training schools. Over 500 children awaited adoption, and some 3,700 were placed in foster homes.

With a grant of $3 million from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, reorganization of child welfare services is under way in North Carolina. Through the collaborative efforts of the NC Child Advocacy Institute, the NC Division of Social Services, and the UNC-CH School of Social Work, a plan is now being implemented that will create a performance-based family and child welfare system. The system will reduce the number of children in foster care and improve the quality of all services, including community and home-based care.

The Kellogg-funded Families for Kids project supports the establishment of a Center for Adoption and Foster Care. The Center will provide training, applied research, program evaluation, technical assistance, consultation, policy analysis, and advocacy. Its primary function, however, will be to develop curricula and implement training for foster and adoptive parents.

Also, with the goal of more families staying together and placing fewer children outside their homes, Family Resource Centers have emerged as one of the best means of strengthening families and communities. Healthy families and communities are the keys to producing healthy children.

Counties that are better or worse than state average (3.74) on Out-of-Home Placement

At the request of Governor Hunt, the Legislature has appropriated $2 million for grants to support Family Resource Centers. Grants range from $50,000 to $75,000 each year for existing or new Centers. Selected broad-based Centers that focus on family economic development and how health and human services agencies can work together may receive up to $200,000 each year for three years.

This new approach, concentrating an array of services on all family members, will both keep troubled families intact and drastically reduce the number of children extracted from their homes and placed in foster care.

County Findings

Out-of-home placement rates ranged from a low of no placements reported for the entire year in Tyrrell County, to a high of 9.8 per 1,000 children in New Hanover County. Fifty-nine counties had rates lower (better) than the state average of 3.74.

Juvenile Arrests

WORSE

16,570 children

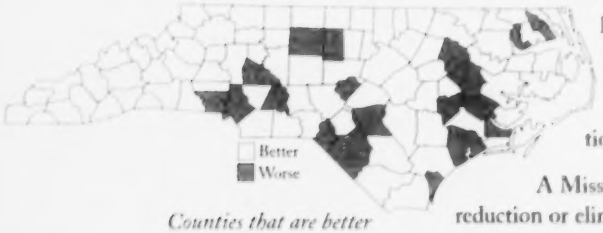
under the age of

16 were arrested.

In 1993, 16,570 children under the age of 16 were arrested, a three percent increase from the previous year. Research supports the fact that quality early childhood education programs, such as Smart Start, can be an important part of the long-range answer to juvenile crime. But, it is necessary to have a short-range answer to deal with juvenile offenders.

The Legislature's 1994 special crime session offered some short-range solutions to halt the rise of juvenile crime by providing funds for various programs, including two additional Wilderness Camps; Alternatives to Detention programs; Community-Based Alternatives programs; expansion of the Governor's One-On-One Mentoring Program; Family Preservation Expansion; After-School Programs for Middle School Students; and an Alternatives to Street Crime program.

North Carolina's public schools also face the daunting challenge of reducing violent and aggressive behavior by students. In a recent publication on Youth Risk Behavior, the NC Department of Public Instruction reported that an estimated 15,000 students (5 percent) in grades 9-12 indicated that they stayed home from school on one or more days because they did not feel safe. More importantly, 10 percent of high school students reported being threatened or injured by a weapon on school property. The 1994 special legislative session on crime addressed the issue of school safety by funding programs to assist children at risk of failure, intervention/prevention grant programs, and coach-mentor training.



Counties that are better or worse than state average (31.16) on Juvenile Arrest Rate

A Mississippi State Senate study panel recently concluded that the reduction or elimination of teenage pregnancy could drastically reduce juvenile crime. To curb the state's high teenage pregnancy rate, the Mississippi Senate's Juvenile Justice and School Violence Committee is recommending that the Department of Public Education develop a sex-education curriculum Mississippi schools could use as part of their health education program.

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* reports that North Carolina's juvenile arrest rate is increasing much faster than the nation as a whole. Between 1985 and 1992, the state's rate increased 133 percent, compared to a 58 percent increase for the nation.

County Findings

Juvenile arrests ranged from zero in 15 counties to over 3,400 in Mecklenburg County. Highest juvenile arrest rates were in Alamance (128) and Guilford (107.2) Counties. Cumberland (9.2), New Hanover (7.2), Mecklenburg (5.6), and Guilford (5.6) Counties had the highest violent crime arrest rates.

Training School Commitments

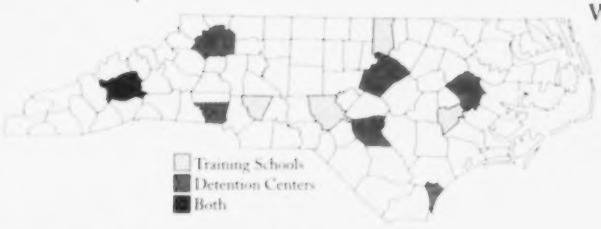
WORSE

Half of the males committed were 15 or 16 years old.

The number of children placed in training schools (865) increased almost four percent in 1994 from the previous year's total of 832. Of these 865, black and Native American children totaled 584 – or 68 percent – even though these population groups comprise only 30 percent of children in North Carolina. Over half of the males committed were 15 and 16 years old.

According to a 1990 study by UNC-Charlotte, 66 counties had disproportionately large numbers of black and Native American juvenile arrests. Some 67 counties had disproportionately more frequent minority juvenile detentions, and 61 counties had disproportionately more frequent minority training school commitments. Overall detention center placements (4,788) declined for the third year in a row.

County Findings



Location of Training Schools and Detention Centers

Wake (44), Guilford (42), and Durham (41) sent the most children to training schools, while 18 counties did not send any children to training schools. Mecklenburg (444) and Guilford (421) sent the most children to detention centers. Camden, Gates, Hyde, and Jones had no detention center commitments.

Child Deaths

WORSE

1,899 children under age 19 died in North Carolina.

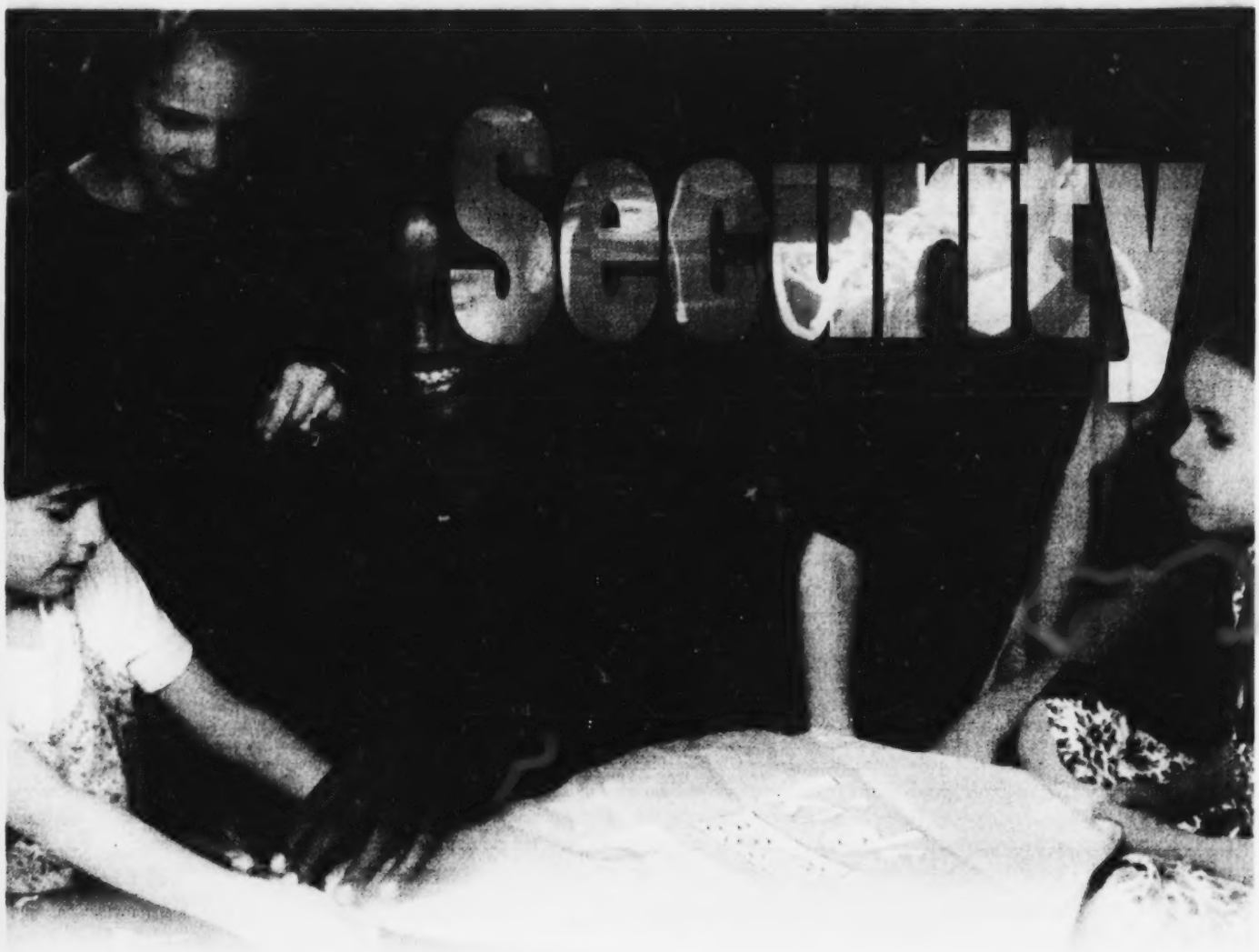
In 1993, 1,899 children under age 19 died in North Carolina. This figure represents an increase of 16 deaths over the previous year, marking the third year in a row that the death toll has risen.

Nothing is more tragic than the death of a child, particularly when death is due to abuse or neglect. Twenty-nine of the 34 victims of child abuse homicide were less than three years old.

Injuries are the leading cause of death in children over the age of one. Every year in North Carolina more children die from injury than die from cancer, heart disease, infections, and other causes combined. Poor males as well as Native American and black children are more likely to die in childhood.

Because of the high number of motor vehicle deaths among children under age 18, the Child Fatality Task Force has proposed a slate of recommendations to the 1995 General Assembly. The recommendations include: graduated driver's licensing; administrative revocation of license for under-age drivers who drink; and seatbelts for all children under 16 and child restraints for children under age five.

The *KIDS COUNT Data Book* using 1992 data for children one to 14, ranks North Carolina 40th in child deaths.



The Vision

THE BEST & WORST

	BEST ▲	WORST ▼
Median Family Income	Wake	Tyrrell
	Franklin	Hyde
	Chatham	Graham
	Durham	Swain
	Johnston	Warren
Children in Poverty	Davie	Warren
	Dare	Halifax
	Catawba	Hertford
	Wake	Hyde
	Cabarrus	Bertie
Children on AFDC	Dare	Northampton
	Watauga	Halifax
	Alleghany	Hertford
	Yadkin	Washington
	Alexander	Perquimans

All children will grow up in an economically stable family. All children will have the opportunity to learn skills that will allow them to earn a living wage to secure their own future.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Child Support

BETTER

Current collections are $409.5 million, an increase of 18 percent.

Across the state, thousands of children are living in poverty because their parents fail to fully support them. Children who do not receive child support are twice as likely to live in poverty as those who receive adequate child support from the absent parent. The key to improving the economic well-being of children is the establishment and enforcement of regular, sufficient child support. The average county child support payment in 1994 was $228 per month, up $14 from $214 the year before.

Progress has been made in child support enforcement over the past decade. State action, spurred by federal incentives to garnish wages, intercept tax refunds, and improve tracking, has been successful. According to child support enforcement officials, automatic wage withholdings (which deducts support owed directly from paychecks) helps to explain the continued success in collecting current child support owed. Still, only 60 percent of all court-ordered payments are actually made. Current collections are $409.5 million, an increase of 18 percent from the previous year.

The state's Child Support Enforcement Section is developing a comprehensive Automated Case Tracking System (ACTS). This system will handle collection and distribution of child support monies on a daily basis, as well as make more efficient child support case management possible for local agents.

Paternity, the essential documentation for a single parent seeking child support, was established in 1994 for 22,521 children, a nine percent increase from last year. State child support enforcement officials point out that as the number of out-of-wedlock births grows, paternity cases also rise. New legislation requires mothers to identify fathers or risk losing their welfare benefits. The critical issue is locating fathers whose identities are known and getting fathers who have been located to pay.

NOTE: The *1995 KIDS COUNT Data Book* reports that more than 18 percent of North Carolina's children are living in households with no adult male present. And, more than six percent of all North Carolina children reside in neighborhoods where the majority of families with children are female-headed. More than 28 percent of all men ages 25-34 earn annual incomes less than the poverty level for a family of four ($14,763).

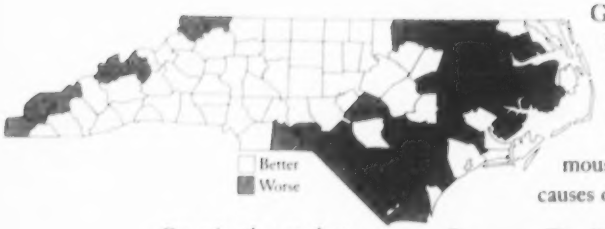
Child Poverty

WORSE

Last year, 343,068 North Carolina children lived in poverty.

North Carolina's children have replaced the elderly as the predominant age group living in poverty. For the first time in state history, children face the prospect of downward socioeconomic mobility. Last year, 343,068 children lived in poverty, an increase of 8.7 percent from the previous year.

A recent report on poverty, published by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, points out that 45 counties have 20 percent or more children under age 18 living in poverty. Further, one-third of the children living in Warren, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Bertie, Graham, Perquimans, and Swain Counties are poor. In 1994, 20.5 percent of North Carolina's 1.7 million children lived in poverty. One in four children under age five are poor.



Counties that are better or worse than state average (20.5) on Child Poverty

Growing up poor affects the future health, education, and well-being of children. Because the complex effects of poverty combine and interact to imperil children in many ways, it may not be enough to ensure only that poor children have access to quality services. Because the costs of child poverty are so enormous, North Carolinians must launch a frontal attack on the root causes of poverty.

County Findings

The percentage of children in poverty ranged from a low of 6.6 percent in Davie to a high of 37.1 percent in Warren. Four counties had more than 10,000 poor children in their county and accounted for 19 percent of all poor children in the state: Mecklenburg, Cumberland, Guilford, and Robeson.

Children on Public Assistance

WORSE

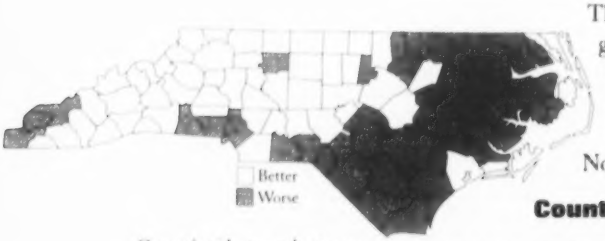
AFDC increased,

reaching 222,980

children per month.

Children in families with one or both parents unemployed, absent, disabled, or deceased qualify for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). AFDC is the federal government's cash assistance program for poor families with children. In North Carolina, a single parent receives $272 a month to cover rent, utilities, and living expenses. To receive AFDC, one must have less than $1,000 in assets, remain below a specified income level for the size of his or her family, and participate in the state's JOBS program.

Sixty-four percent of the AFDC recipients are Black. More than four in 10 recipients collect benefits for less than a year, and 61 percent are off the rolls within two years. Unfortunately, two-thirds of those who leave AFDC within two years return to it within five years. The average number of children on AFDC in 1994 increased 0.9 percent, reaching an average of 222,980 children per month.



Counties that are better or worse than state average (13.1) on Children Receiving AFDC

The Food Stamp Program, financed solely by the federal government, provides coupons that can be used in lieu of cash for certain foods at most grocery stores. The Program currently serves approximately 257,727 households containing approximately 629,757 people. The value of food stamps issued in North Carolina is approximately $40 million per month.

County Findings

Dare County (4.7 percent) has the lowest proportion of children receiving AFDC while Northampton County (31.6 percent) has the highest. There were 47 counties with higher percentages of children on AFDC than the state average.

Health

COUNTY	Infant Mortality Rate/1,000 Rank	% Low Birth Weight Rank	% Births to Single Teens Rank
Alamance	10.3 62	8.9 58	9.5 46
Alexander	2.7 2	5.6 10	11.5 62
Alleghany	0.0 1	5.1 4	6.4 20
Anson	10.3 62	10.0 76	19.0 92
Ashe	4.7 11	8.4 47	10.2 43
Avery	20.3 93	9.1 63	6.1 9
Beaufort	13.5 69	8.4 47	14.8 72
Bertie	10.7 64	13.9 98	23.8 100
Bladen	17.6 89	10.8 87	16.5 83
Brunswick	17.1 86	7.4 27	11.1 59
Buncombe	9.0 39	8.0 42	8.8 26
Burke	13.9 72	7.9 36	10.5 44
Cabarrus	8.4 32	7.3 24	10.1 41
Caldwell	10.1 57	8.2 46	13.1 64
Camden	52.6 100	15.8 100	12.3 59
Carteret	9.2 40	5.5 8	6.9 14
Caswell	19.3 92	9.7 71	9.7 47
Catawba	8.0 30	7.4 27	11.7 63
Chatham	7.7 28	7.3 24	7.7 17
Cherokee	3.9 10	5.5 8	6.7 13
Chowan	11.1 67	10.0 76	20.0 94
Clay	14.9 76	6.0 13	6.0 12
Cleveland	12.2 65	9.4 70	15.3 77
Columbus	21.3 96	7.2 22	15.8 79
Craven	8.0 30	6.7 19	9.1 29
Cumberland	13.4 68	8.4 47	9.1 29
Currituck	17.1 86	6.9 20	8.0 20
Dare	6.6 19	5.9 11	5.6 4
Davidson	12.3 66	9.2 66	10.1 41
Davie	15.2 78	7.6 35	10.9 47
Duplin	16.3 82	8.0 42	16.8 84
Durham	12.0 64	10.6 86	10.0 39
Edgecombe	21.4 97	11.9 93	17.7 88
Forsyth	11.6 61	9.9 74	10.6 45
Franklin	15.9 83	10.9 90	10.9 47
Gaston	8.9 37	9.2 66	13.1 64
Gates	9.9 49	11.9 93	15.8 79
Graham	0.0 1	4.7 3	9.3 34
Granville	13.5 69	10.0 76	13.1 64
Greene	27.6 99	10.5 83	19.9 93
Guilford	9.2 40	8.9 58	11.0 49
Halifax	15.0 77	10.4 83	21.0 96
Harnett	7.9 29	8.1 44	10.0 39
Haywood	7.3 24	6.0 13	8.5 22
Henderson	3.5 9	7.4 27	8.4 21
Hertford	19.5 94	8.8 56	16.0 81
Hoke	14.5 74	8.9 58	18.1 90
Hyde	0.0 1	15.4 99	20.0 94
Iredell	13.0 67	7.7 37	12.7 61
Jackson	3.3 8	6.3 16	8.6 23

Education

COUNTY	SAT Scores Rank	Dropout Rate Rank	High School Graduation Rate Rank
Alamance	848 39	4.53 94	62.4 56
Alexander	838 31	3.59 72	71.3 11
Alleghany	877 14	2.93 50	66.7 41
Anson	756 94	2.86 44	68.9 20
Ashe	902 1	3.53 65	69.1 19
Avery	891 9	2.87 45	62.5 55
Beaufort	821 62	2.91 47	72.3 9
Bertie	711 97	2.89 46	51.9 94
Bladen	774 89	3.53 65	62.0 60
Brunswick	776 88	2.54 28	63.8 51
Buncombe	913 3	3.56 69	66.2 37
Burke	865 26	4.86 95	68.7 23
Cabarrus	879 13	3.30 58	76.4 3
Caldwell	874 16	5.37 97	48.2 100
Camden	811 66	0.55 2	65.8 39
Carteret	858 32	3.58 70	64.8 46
Caswell	781 86	3.83 80	58.6 79
Catawba	872 18	3.41 61	71.9 11
Chatham	830 59	3.11 54	61.5 64
Cherokee	847 40	3.36 59	64.1 50
Chowan	842 46	2.22 17	68.0 27
Clay	864 26	1.04 4	65.2 45
Cleveland	838 31	2.37 22	67.8 29
Columbus	769 91	3.83 80	70.3 16
Craven	857 33	2.24 20	57.4 83
Cumberland	816 64	2.30 21	76.4 3
Currituck	877 14	2.77 37	60.6 70
Dare	896 7	1.83 12	65.4 43
Davidson	852 37	2.77 37	66.4 35
Davie	914 2	2.56 29	78.4 1
Duplin	799 77	2.42 24	57.1 86
Durham	886 11	2.40 23	55.6 88
Edgecombe	811 66	3.54 67	61.9 61
Forsyth	867 21	2.86 43	64.7 47
Franklin	859 31	3.63 73	60.0 75
Gaston	839 50	2.22 17	64.4 49
Gates	763 93	1.50 8	62.3 57
Graham	805 74	7.22 100	61.9 61
Granville	808 70	1.77 11	53.9 89
Greene	825 61	0.54 1	60.4 72
Guilford	870 20	2.70 34	68.8 21
Halifax	705 98	4.19 87	48.5 99
Harnett	846 42	4.10 85	60.3 73
Haywood	892 8	2.57 30	69.7 18
Henderson	898 6	3.14 56	68.5 24
Hertford	688 100	1.83 12	53.1 91
Hoke	773 90	2.77 37	49.5 97
Hyde	767 92	1.85 14	59.3 78
Iredell	841 47	4.35 91	57.7 82
Jackson	881 12	3.55 68	68.2 25

Safety

COUNTY	Child Abuse/Neglect Rate/1,000 Rank	Out-of-Home Placement Rate/1,000 Rank	Juvenile Arrest Rate/1,000 Rank	Violent Arrest Rate Rank
Alamance	41.52 37	2.93 38	127.95 100	2.19 87
Alexander	22.00 6	3.40 53	0.84 24	0.00 1
Alleghany	72.99 73	3.08 46	9.42 60	0.00 1
Anson	21.75 5	4.76 78	16.29 71	0.00 1
Ashe	62.25 63	1.12 7	5.17 47	0.00 1
Avery	74.00 75	3.09 49	0.86 25	0.00 1
Beaufort	91.01 92	2.91 36	21.98 78	0.75 71
Bertie	16.09 3	1.08 6	3.43 40	0.00 1
Bladen	64.82 65	2.52 30	2.88 37	0.00 1
Brunswick	46.82 42	2.20 22	3.41 39	0.00 1
Buncombe	85.73 88	4.70 76	18.59 74	0.31 61
Burke	59.75 45	3.99 67	2.16 15	0.17 55
Cabarrus	73.73 74	2.28 25	5.23 48	0.38 65
Caldwell	77.90 80	6.57 91	14.34 68	1.24 80
Camden	34.84 15	3.58 58	0.00 1	0.00 1
Carteret	49.29 36	1.42 8	10.32 63	0.25 60
Caswell	69.12 69	2.96 40	0.00 1	0.00 1
Catawba	60.88 60	4.24 70	6.45 55	0.10 56
Chatham	55.84 52	2.99 45	1.11 28	0.00 1
Cherokee	65.19 66	4.32 72	0.58 19	0.00 1
Chowan	33.94 12	1.94 12	34.37 86	1.64 84
Clay	38.39 21	0.68 2	0.00 1	0.00 1
Cleveland	137.86 100	5.98 89	3.90 41	0.00 1
Columbus	49.33 37	2.93 38	4.73 42	0.00 1
Craven	53.76 46	2.05 13	34.48 87	2.32 90
Cumberland	71.90 71	2.88 35	47.25 93	9.21 100
Currituck	77.56 79	4.79 79	6.03 54	0.00 1
Dare	25.74 8	2.96 40	11.63 64	0.00 1
Davidson	56.89 54	2.15 19	21.34 77	1.37 82
Davie	37.24 18	3.65 59	6.73 56	0.00 1
Duplin	56.85 53	3.25 52	0.80 23	0.00 1
Durham	45.16 29	4.35 74	2.55 16	0.08 53
Edgecombe	100.51 96	6.70 93	93.14 98	4.44 95
Forsyth	30.28 9	3.12 50	13.64 66	0.52 68
Franklin	59.75 57	3.89 63	0.67 22	0.00 1
Gaston	61.97 61	5.34 85	38.90 90	2.08 86
Gates	3.79 1	0.81 4	1.30 29	0.00 1
Graham	86.62 88	7.53 96	0.00 1	0.00 1
Granville	33.78 11	2.17 20	21.18 76	0.63 69
Greene	63.36 63	2.86 34	1.43 30	0.00 1
Guilford	40.35 26	5.07 81	107.18 99	5.57 97
Halifax	55.40 49	4.24 70	30.81 82	1.35 81
Harnett	53.28 45	3.44 56	5.37 50	0.36 63
Haywood	109.07 99	6.47 90	5.76 52	0.00 1
Henderson	80.54 82	2.72 32	6.93 57	0.79 72
Hertford	42.74 28	1.84 11	9.73 62	0.00 1
Hoke	34.39 13	4.05 68	28.91 81	0.00 1
Hyde	36.06 16	6.89 94	0.00 1	0.00 1
Iredell	54.16 48	3.87 62	0.27 16	0.00 1
Jackson	87.12 90	2.96 40	0.00 1	0.00 1

Security

COUNTY	Median Family Income Rank	% Child Poverty Rank	% Children on AFDC Rank
Alamance	$38,800 15	11.28 11	9.0 24
Alexander	$35,800 10	11.61 13	6.5 3
Alleghany	$25,700 88	24.77 93	5.7 1
Anson	$29,300 73	22.93 88	21.6 85
Ashe	$25,500 90	21.17 82	10.2 33
Avery	$27,700 83	16.10 40	7.7 14
Beaufort	$29,500 69	24.81 94	16.6 72
Bertie	$24,100 95	35.27 96	21.6 85
Bladen	$24,800 92	27.96 92	21.6 85
Brunswick	$37,800 24	21.33 83	14.6 63
Buncombe	$34,900 18	14.95 31	11.0 46
Burke	$35,800 10	12.96 21	7.9 15
Cabarrus	$41,700 2	9.73 5	8.4 21
Caldwell	$35,800 10	13.32 24	7.8 16
Camden	$33,700 46	19.53 53	12.1 45
Carteret	$34,900 18	15.73 37	10.3 41
Caswell	$32,300 50	17.95 49	12.8 49
Catawba	$35,800 10	8.89 3	7.5 12
Chatham	$46,800 1	11.71 15	7.2 9
Cherokee	$26,100 86	26.21 79	15.6 70
Chowan	$29,400 70	23.64 70	21.5 84
Clay	$26,800 84	20.21 57	8.9 23
Cleveland	$35,000 17	14.06 27	15.3 66
Columbus	$26,300 85	28.71 87	21.1 83
Craven	$33,200 48	19.47 51	13.7 54
Cumberland	$31,400 56	20.11 56	13.9 57
Currituck	$39,900 13	13.38 25	10.9 35
Dare	$39,000 13	8.30 2	4.7 1
Davidson	$38,800 15	12.43 18	9.6 30
Davie	$38,800 15	6.58 1	6.6 7
Duplin	$27,100 82	22.34 67	15.4 67
Durham	$46,800 1	15.30 34	15.5 69
Edgecombe	$34,000 43	28.44 85	23.2 92
Forsyth	$38,800 15	14.89 32	14.4 60
Franklin	$46,800 1	17.12 45	13.7 54
Gaston	$41,700 2	14.07 28	14.2 59
Gates	$32,800 49	20.37 59	13.8 56
Graham	$22,800 98	34.89 95	14.4 60
Granville	$37,000 27	16.86 43	12.1 45
Greene	$32,000 51	27.79 81	17.6 74
Guilford	$38,800 15	13.32 24	12.8 51
Halifax	$25,700 88	36.48 99	28.9 99
Harnett	$30,400 61	21.72 64	15.2 64
Haywood	$30,200 65	15.39 35	11.7 43
Henderson	$35,500 38	15.85 38	11.5 39
Hertford	$25,000 93	36.36 98	26.6 98
Hoke	$29,300 73	28.79 88	21.9 88
Hyde	$22,300 99	36.21 97	23.3 92
Iredell	$38,400 23	11.67 14	9.2 25
Jackson	$30,400 63	17.89 48	10.6 34

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Johnston	6.8	21	8.7	55	9.9	38	846	42	2.81	42	63.5	52	37.41	19	2.23	24	9.43	61	1.16	77
Jones	0.0	1	8.8	56	14.4	69	804	76	3.45	63	63.0	54	67.92	68	5.30	83	0.00	1	0.00	1
Lee	14.7	74	8.5	51	14.4	69	811	66	3.58	70	62.2	58	52.34	42	2.20	22	68.19	95	2.20	88
Lenoir	14.7	74	9.4	70	18.8	91	814	65	3.36	59	53.6	90	57.24	55	3.21	51	43.30	92	1.88	85
Lincoln	19.7	94	7.7	37	12.3	59	834	56	3.49	64	58.2	80	90.41	91	3.01	47	0.48	18	0.00	1
Macon	16.5	84	7.9	39	7.0	15	857	33	3.90	83	66.5	34	100.75	97	2.08	16	0.00	1	0.00	1
Madison	5.5	16	9.3	69	8.8	26	836	54	2.59	32	65.6	41	53.83	47	5.31	84	0.00	1	0.00	1
Martin	11.7	62	11.4	92	21.3	97	788	82	2.22	17	62.1	59	20.17	4	3.39	54	17.00	72	0.45	67
McDowell	4.2	11	9.9	74	8.6	23	847	40	4.42	93	72.0	10	72.94	72	6.65	92	1.68	32	0.00	1
Mecklenburg	9.8	47	9.1	63	9.2	32	887	10	5.57	98	68.8	21	47.81	33	3.90	64	90.20	97	5.63	98
Mitchell	6.0	18	5.4	5	4.8	2	808	70	3.11	54	66.3	36	86.52	87	2.99	45	0.93	27	0.00	1
Montgomery	11.9	63	8.9	58	17.3	87	796	78	3.82	79	58.2	80	49.33	37	0.98	5	0.00	1	0.00	1
Moore	8.8	36	7.3	24	11.8	55	846	42	3.69	76	69.8	17	39.74	25	2.32	27	8.01	58	0.43	66
Nash	9.9	49	11.3	91	13.8	67	833	57	3.28	57	65.6	41	55.65	51	3.55	57	0.89	26	0.00	1
New Hanover	7.3	24	8.6	52	11.9	56	863	27	3.89	82	60.6	70	94.55	93	9.83	100	64.00	94	7.23	99
Northampton	7.3	24	7.6	35	17.8	89	700	99	2.80	41	68.1	26	82.07	83	3.83	63	4.88	43	1.08	74
Onslow	8.7	35	7.4	27	4.7	1	853	36	1.26	7	60.9	69	75.01	77	2.28	25	33.09	85	2.49	92
Orange	8.9	37	7.1	21	6.0	7	820	63	2.43	25	61.7	63	46.04	31	2.76	33	5.15	46	0.36	63
Pamlico	9.3	43	7.4	27	6.5	11	829	60	1.19	5	73.7	7	45.39	30	0.77	3	0.00	1	0.00	1
Pasquotank	17.3	88	12.7	96	14.7	71	808	70	1.96	16	61.5	64	52.54	44	2.41	29	34.92	88	1.09	75
Pender	9.6	45	10.1	79	12.5	62	786	83	2.78	40	61.5	64	74.79	76	8.68	99	0.41	17	0.00	1
Perquimans	15.7	79	5.5	6	15.0	74	786	83	0.96	3	74.5	5	17.50	3	5.23	82	0.00	1	0.00	1
Person	15.8	80	9.5	72	10.8	46	793	80	3.64	74	70.6	15	38.68	23	6.99	95	14.94	70	1.18	79
Pitt	10.7	55	10.4	83	15.0	74	874	16	3.05	52	61.1	68	84.51	85	5.62	86	32.87	84	4.78	96
Polk	6.6	19	7.9	39	11.2	51	861	28	2.52	26	51.7	95	36.88	17	2.05	13	3.21	38	0.00	1
Randolph	5.9	17	7.2	22	9.1	29	860	30	5.88	99	57.3	85	63.89	64	2.36	28	12.74	65	0.35	62
Richmond	8.5	33	9.2	66	17.1	86	831	58	2.52	26	61.2	67	83.33	84	4.32	72	5.75	51	0.24	59
Robeson	11.3	60	10.8	87	21.3	97	738	95	2.57	30	53.1	91	98.00	94	3.74	60	81.03	96	4.07	94
Rockingham	11.2	59	10.2	82	12.1	58	851	38	3.80	78	66.9	31	50.17	40	2.09	17	17.63	73	0.14	57
Rowan	6.9	23	8.6	52	12.3	59	856	35	3.42	62	66.1	38	55.58	50	5.78	87	36.76	89	2.30	89
Rutherford	16.6	85	10.1	79	12.0	57	840	49	2.92	48	63.2	53	108.93	98	5.04	80	1.45	31	0.00	1
Sampson	8.6	34	9.1	63	15.4	78	784	85	1.22	6	73.9	6	38.89	24	2.63	31	5.26	49	0.00	1
Scotland	22.3	98	12.5	95	23.2	99	781	86	4.36	92	48.7	98	37.76	20	1.42	8	32.85	83	0.83	73
Stanly	10.6	56	6.4	17	7.9	19	846	42	1.89	15	65.8	39	79.68	81	1.48	10	39.47	91	0.72	70
Stokes	16.3	82	10.8	87	6.5	11	810	69	4.29	89	72.4	8	60.48	59	3.98	66	6.02	53	0.00	1
Surry	4.9	14	6.2	15	7.8	18	841	47	3.06	53	67.5	30	50.00	39	2.05	13	0.61	20	0.00	1
Swain	18.5	90	4.3	1	14.8	72	869	21	3.02	51	60.0	75	47.99	34	8.13	97	2.06	33	0.00	1
Transylvania	6.8	21	5.5	6	9.2	32	836	54	3.73	77	66.9	31	59.05	56	8.32	98	2.08	34	0.00	1
Tyrrell	0	1	7.5	33	7.5	16	807	73	2.71	35	78.1	2	31.02	10	0.00	1	0.00	1	0.00	1
Union	9.7	46	8.6	52	9.3	34	871	19	2.62	33	60.3	73	86.88	89	3.33	53	19.86	75	1.17	78
Vance	4.4	12	8.4	47	13.8	67	796	78	4.32	90	59.9	77	99.18	95	5.88	88	14.61	69	2.87	93
Wake	9.8	48	7.5	33	5.9	6	929	1	4.08	84	71.7	12	38.54	22	2.92	37	25.73	79	1.52	83
Warren	19.0	91	12.9	97	17.1	85	728	96	4.12	86	50.5	96	34.49	14	4.70	76	0.63	21	0.00	1
Washington	4.9	14	5.9	11	15.1	76	789	81	1.66	9	65.3	44	52.31	41	2.98	44	5.02	44	0.00	1
Watauga	11.1	57	5.0	3	5.8	5	912	4	1.66	10	67.9	28	22.46	7	2.17	20	0.00	1	0.00	1
Wayne	9.4	44	8.1	44	11.7	53	805	74	2.71	35	71.2	14	75.08	78	2.97	43	28.08	80	1.11	76
Wilkes	9.2	40	7.4	27	9.0	28	861	28	5.21	96	56.4	87	66.43	67	3.92	65	5.05	45	0.00	1
Wilson	13.7	71	10.1	79	16.3	82	837	53	4.20	88	52.3	93	70.76	70	4.22	69	13.84	67	2.33	91
Yadkin	7.3	24	9.0	62	8.7	25	868	22	2.92	48	64.5	48	48.39	35	4.54	75	9.24	59	0.00	1
Yancey	0.0	1	6.5	18	4.9	3	867	23	3.67	75	57.4	83	52.42	43	2.09	17	0.00	1	0.00	1
Average	10.6		8.7		11.0		860		3.35		64.4		59.65		3.74		31.16		2.01	

Johnston	$46,800	1	16.64	41	12.4	47														
Jones	$27,200	81	24.68	72	14.5	62														
Lee	$36,500	28	20.36	58	13.1	52														
Lenoir	$31,200	57	27.96	82	22.0	89														
Lincoln	$41,700	7	12.85	20	9.4	29														
Macon	$29,400	70	19.99	55	9.3	27														
Madison	$34,900	38	22.19	66	11.9	43														
Martin	$28,100	77	28.95	89	20.6	82														
McDowell	$31,600	54	11.89	17	8.4	21														
Mecklenburg	$41,700	7	13.00	22	14.0	58														
Mitchell	$28,100	77	17.08	44	8.3	20														
Montgomery	$30,200	65	19.59	54	12.8	49														
Moore	$37,700	25	16.65	42	11.3	37														
Nash	$34,000	43	17.20	46	12.4	47														
New Hanover	$37,600	26	19.29	50	17.8	75														
Northampton	$25,500	90	32.67	92	31.6	100														
Onslow	$28,000	79	16.06	39	9.2	25														
Orange	$46,800	1	10.08	8	7.3	10														
Pamlico	$30,800	60	22.08	65	17.0	73														
Pasquotank	$30,500	62	26.81	80	19.5	78														
Pender	$31,000	59	24.60	71	15.4	67														
Perquimans	$25,800	87	33.66	94	24.7	96														
Person	$35,800	30	17.25	47	11.6	40														
Pitt	$35,200	36	25.33	76	18.0	76														
Polk	$36,400	29	9.86	6	6.5	5														
Randolph	$38,800	15	10.00	7	7.4	11														
Richmond	$29,900	67	23.02	69	18.1	77														
Robeson	$26,900	83	31.67	90	23.2	92														
Rockingham	$34,900	38	15.59	36	11.8	42														
Rowan	$41,700	7	11.60	12	11.4	38														
Rutherford	$31,800	53	14.80	31	12.0	44														
Sampson	$28,400	76	25.19	75	16.4	71														
Scotland	$30,600	61	25.94	77	24.3	95														
Stanly	$33,900	45	14.66	30	7.9	18														
Stokes	$38,800	15	10.39	9	7.7	14														
Surry	$31,200	57	12.51	19	6.9	8														
Swain	$23,000	97	33.43	93	20.3	80														
Transylvania	$34,200	42	19.47	51	13.1	52														
Tyrrell	$20,500	100	32.20	91	22.2	90														
Union	$41,700	7	10.44	10	9.6	30														
Vance	$28,800	75	26.02	78	22.2	90														
Wake	$46,800	1	9.23	4	7.5	12														
Warren	$23,300	96	37.13	100	20.5	81														
Washington	$29,400	70	28.35	84	26.6	97														
Watauga	$32,000	53	11.86	16	5.0	2														
Wayne	$31,600	54	20.41	60	15.2	66														
Wilkes	$29,700	68	13.54	26	9.3	27														
Wilson	$33,400	47	28.56	86	20.2	79														
Yadkin	$38,800	15	14.11	29	6.0	4														
Yancey	$25,300	92	20.56	61	7.8	16														
	$36,100		20.50		13.1															

County Data Notes

1. See Glossary for complete information on data definition, time and source.
2. For most indicators, a ranking of 1 = best and 100 = worst.
3. All counties are ranked from 1 to 100. When counties share the same rate, percentage or total as other counties, they receive the same ranking. All counties that reported zero for certain indicators received a ranking of 1.
4. For the indicators Median Family Income and SAT Scores, a ranking of 1 = highest and 100 = lowest.
5. See page 13 for City School Systems.
6. Student Dropout Rate is the unduplicated percentage of students per county in grades 7-12 who left school in fiscal year 1993/1994.
7. It is important to note, however, that a county's median income does not accurately reflect the gap between rich and poor. It conceals the reality that low-income residents, faced with the high cost of living, still find difficulty in acquiring adequate housing, health care, child care, and other essential services.

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Glossary & Sources

Health

Infant Mortality Rate The number of deaths to infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births in 1993. *State Center for Health & Environmental Statistics, Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.*

Low Birth Weight The percentage of children born weighing 5.5 pounds or less at birth in 1993. *State Center for Health & Environmental Statistics, Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.*

Percentage of All Births to Single Teens The percentage of live births which occurred to unmarried women ages 15-19 in 1993. *State Center for Health & Environmental Statistics, Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.*

Percentage of Children Without Insurance The estimated percentage and number of children age 17 and younger who are uninsured. *Center for Health Policy Research and Education, Duke University.*

Education

High School Graduation Rates The projected percentage of ninth graders who are expected to graduate from high school four years later for FY 1993-94. *NC Department of Public Instruction. (See page 13 for city school systems.)*

Student Dropout Rate The unduplicated percentage of students in grades 7-12 who dropped out of school during the 1993-94 school year. *NC Department of Public Instruction. (See page 13 for city school systems.)*

SAT Score The average score of students taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in North Carolina, FY 1993-94. *The North Carolina 1994 Scholastic Aptitude Test Report, August 1994. (See page 13 for city school systems.)*

Safety

Children Reported as Abused/Neglected The number of children reported for abuse and/or neglect per 1,000 children ages 0-17 residing in the county for FY 1993-94. This is not an unduplicated count. *Division of Social Services, NC Department of Human Resources and Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina.*

Children in Out-of-Home Placement The number of children for whom county departments of social services have custody or placement responsibility for the quarter ending June 30, 1994. Rate is per 1,000 children of all children ages 0-17. *Calculated by the Institute with data provided by Division of Social Services, NC Department of Human Resources.*

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Training School Commitments The total admissions for 1993-94. *Division of Youth Services, NC Department of Human Resources.*

Juvenile Arrest Rate The number of juveniles ages 10 through 15 who were arrested in 1993, per 1,000 children. *Governor's Crime Commission, NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety.*

Violent Juvenile Arrests Violent crimes are defined as murder, non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. In North Carolina, a juvenile is anyone under age 18, but those aged 16 and 17 who commit a crime will be tried as adults. *Governor's Crime Commission, NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety.*

Child Deaths The number of children under the age of 19 who died in 1993. State Center for Health and Environmental Statistics, Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources. *Division of Epidemiology, Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources.*

Security

Median Family Income The estimated median family income for all families with children, adjusted for 1995. *1990 Census Data, State Data Center, NC Office of State Budget and Management.*

Children Living in Poverty The percentage of children living in families whose income falls below the official federal poverty level, $14,763 for a family of four in 1993. *Estimated number of children in poverty based on 1990 Census Data and 1994 current population survey, State Data Center, NC Office of State Budget and Management.*

Children on AFDC The average number of children served monthly by the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, 1993-94. AFDC is a public assistance program for families with children whose annual income falls below the federal poverty level. *Division of Social Services, NC Department of Human Resources. Percentage calculated by the Institute.*

Child Support Collections The total child support collections generated. *The Administrative Office of the Courts and the state's Child Support Enforcement Office, 1993-94. NC Department of Human Resources.*

County Data Chart

All definitions and sources for the County Data Table on pages 22 and 23 are the same.

National Data

National data and rankings were provided by *KIDS COUNT Data Book*, State Profiles of Child Well-Being, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1995. NOTE: All data are from 1992.

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